

Central Inspection

Mission. The mission of Central Inspection is to enhance public safety and welfare through enforcement of City codes relating to building construction, housing maintenance, zoning, regulatory licensing, and neighborhood improvement services.

Overview. Central Inspection provides building, housing, and zoning code enforcement services for developers, building contractors, homeowners, and business owners. Service is provided primarily by certified building and housing inspectors, with forty-six staff dedicated to providing field inspections across the City.

Central Inspection conducts approximately 138,000 on-site inspections, reviews and issues 30,000 permits, and licenses over 2,000 contractors annually. In addition, housing inspectors issue in the vicinity of 11,500 code enforcement notices on 6,000 neighborhood inspection cases. Central Inspection issues or renews over 3,900 trade certifications every year.

Building inspectors provide detailed inspections of new construction across the City. Housing inspectors respond directly to citizen requests and complaints and help protect the value of existing real estate, particularly properties located in more mature sections of the City.

In addition to field inspection services, Central Inspection also reviews construction building plans of developers and builders and supports the Development Assistance Center, a one-stop City coordinating unit for real estate developers.



Building Permit Examiner assists a contractor with a building permit.

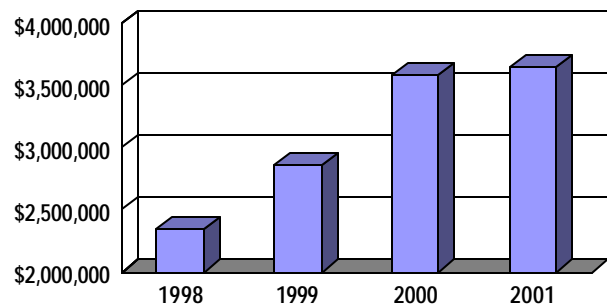
As the City moves toward becoming more Internet and E-Government focused, Central Inspection is examining the feasibility of bringing several of its services online. These services would allow citizens, contractors, property owners and businesses around-the-clock Internet capability to perform several functions. Submitting development plans, permit and license applications, checking the status of applications and permits, and looking up real estate property are examples of services that can be provided online. In alignment with the City's

plan to become more E-Government oriented, Central Inspection will become involved making services available on the Internet.

Finance and Operations. Central Inspection is a self-sustaining fund supported entirely by user fees derived from building code permitting and enforcement activity. Approximately 55 percent of annual revenues are derived from the collection of building permit fees on new residential and commercial construction in the City.

New construction is a highly cyclical industry. In order to protect the Central Inspection Fund from sharp downturns in the market, an operating cash reserve is maintained equal to three to four months of operating costs. This buffer allows quality inspection staff to be retained in periods of recession and provides the opportunity for hiring of additional staff during times of peak activity. Because building permit fees provide the bulk of revenues for operations, the fees have a significant impact on fund balance. Periodic adjustments are implemented based on construction activity and fund balance, and are generally discussed with, and supported by, Central Inspection staff and builders before implementation.

Building Permit Revenues

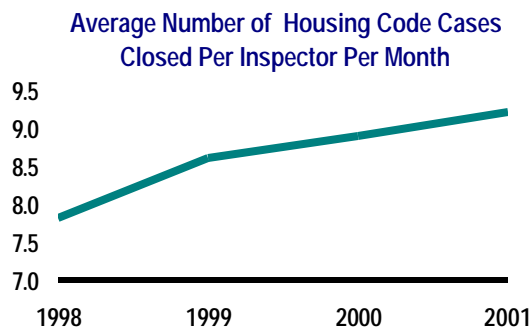


Operations and service delivery have recently been enhanced with full implementation of an automated development tracking system.

The system, purchased over a four-year period, provides for coordination of building projects as the projects pass through the various stages of the development process.

Future plans call for development of a computer website. In addition, Internet-based permitting is anticipated within the next two years.

Construction of large commercial projects slowed considerably in 1999 as the Wichita area market became saturated with "big box" regional retailers. At the same time, the valuation of new residential construction has been--on average--declining. These two factors have resulted in a decline in revenues for the fund. A 15% fee increase was implemented in April, 2000 and an additional 20% increase will be applied in July, 2000. City Council policy stipulates that the fund balance must have a reserve equal to three months, and the fee increases will bring the fund to the appropriate levels. In



conjunction with the fee increases, expenditure adjustments will be made. Further fee increases may be required if revenues fail to meet expectations.

Central Inspection has increased its focus on improving the efficiency and quality of its service delivery in recent years. With cross training, inspectors can perform multiple types of inspections at one site, thus eliminating the need to send out another inspector to inspect another item. To further enhance

service delivery and mitigate non-productive travel time, inspectors are typically assigned to only one quadrant of the city.

As the City grows and expands, demand for building inspections continues to rise. At the same time, existing housing stock continues to age, triggering the need for additional housing code enforcement activity. The field staff of the Central Inspection strives to improve performance by increasing volume and decreasing turnaround time for services.

	Selected Service Levels			
	1998	1999	2000	2001
Building permits issued	6,929	8,758	7,800	8,000
Building inspections completed	38,782	26,831	33,000	36,000
Housing code inspections	19,821	18,439	19,000	19,600
Housing cases closed annually	1,128	1,234	1,280	1,325

Central Inspection Budget Summary					
	1999 Actual	2000 Adopted	2000 Revised	2001 Adopted	2002 Approved
Central Inspection Revenue	3,906,020	4,417,050	4,388,570	4,944,640	5,042,870
Personal Services	3,161,915	3,345,644	3,364,670	3,720,680	3,954,400
Contractual Services	725,876	1,014,380	858,890	861,580	861,580
Commodities	52,668	40,960	28,960	28,960	28,960
Capital Outlay	8,113	43,400	43,400	9,600	9,600
Other	349,910	1,280,870	92,650	1,258,000	96,970
Total Central Inspection Expenditures	4,298,481	5,725,254	4,388,570	5,878,820	4,951,510
Revenue Over (Under) Expenditures	(392,461)	(1,308,204)	0	(934,180)	91,360
Central Inspection Fund Balance	996,493	0	996,493	62,313	153,673
Position Summary					
Total full-time	70	73	73	73	73
Total part-time	0	0	0	0	0
Total FTE	70	73	73	73	73